

2017 SEASON



**sydney symphony orchestra**

**David Robertson**

The Lowy Chair of Chief Conductor and Artistic Director

# Ravishing Ravel

## *Spinning Tales*

THURSDAY AFTERNOON SYMPHONY  
Thursday 27 July, 1.30pm

TEA & SYMPHONY  
Friday 28 July, 11am

GREAT CLASSICS  
Saturday 29 July, 2pm





CLASSICAL



Keith Saunders

**Ravishing Ravel**  
*Spinning Tales*

**STRAVINSKY** Fireworks, Op.4  
**RAVEL** Shéhérazade\*  
**RAVEL** Daphnis et Chloé – Ballet\*  
**David Robertson** conductor  
**Susan Graham** mezzo-soprano  
**Sydney Philharmonia Choirs**

Thursday Afternoon Symphony  
**Thu 27 Jul 1.30pm**  
Tea & Symphony  
**Fri 28 Jul 11am\***  
Great Classics  
**Sat 29 Jul 2pm**  
Sydney Opera House



Benjamin Ealovega

**Pieter Wispelwey**  
**plays the Bach Cello Suites**

**JS BACH** Cello Suites Nos. 1 to 6  
**Pieter Wispelwey** cello

Special Event  
**Sun 6 Aug 2pm**  
**Mon 7 Aug 7pm**  
City Recital Hall



Christie Brewster

**Shefali's Playlist**

Music by **HAYDN**, **BRITTEN**, **MENDELSSOHN**, and  
**JS BACH** arr. **Oguy** Goldberg Variations,  
BWV988: Selections  
**Toby Thatcher** conductor

Playlist  
**Tue 8 Aug 6.30pm**  
City Recital Hall



Keith Saunders

**Gnarly Buttons**

**ADAMS** Gnarly Buttons  
**NEAL** Valley of Lost Things **PREMIERE**  
**BOULEZ** ...explosante-fixe...  
**David Robertson** conductor  
**Francesco Celata** clarinet  
**Mark Sparks** flute

SSO at Carriageworks  
**Sun 13 Aug 5pm**  
Carriageworks



Berthold Fabricius

**Beethoven & Bruckner**  
*Simone Young Conducts*

**BEETHOVEN** Piano Concerto No.2  
**BRUCKNER** Symphony No.5  
**Simone Young** conductor  
**Imogen Cooper** piano

Thursday Afternoon Symphony  
**Thu 17 Aug 1.30pm**  
Emirates Metro Series  
**Fri 18 Aug 8pm**  
Great Classics  
**Sat 19 Aug 2pm**  
Sydney Opera House



Sussie Ahlburg

**Imogen Cooper in Recital**

**BEETHOVEN** 7 Bagatelles, Op.33  
**HAYDN** Sonata in C minor, Hob.XVI:20  
**BEETHOVEN** Variations on 'La stessa, la stessissima'  
**ADÈS** Darknesse Visible  
**BEETHOVEN** Sonata in A flat, Op.110

International Pianists in Recital  
**Mon 21 Aug 7pm**  
City Recital Hall



Jay Fram

**New World Memories**

*Robertson conducts Dvořák 9*  
**MENDELSSOHN** The Hebrides  
**MACKEY** Mnemosyne's Pool **AUSTRALIAN PREMIERE**  
**DVOŘÁK** Symphony No.9, New World  
**David Robertson** conductor

APT Master Series  
**Wed 23 Aug 8pm**  
**Fri 25 Aug 8pm**  
**Sat 26 Aug 8pm**  
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COMING UP

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**David Robertson** Chief Conductor and Artistic Director

**RACHMANINOFF PIANO CONCERTOS**

## The 'Rach 2'

### *Piano Concerto No.2*

Rachmaninoff's Second Concerto – possibly the most popular piano concerto of all time – will be played by stunning Chinese-American pianist George Li.

**ADAMS** The Chairman Dances

**RACHMANINOFF** Piano Concerto No.2

**PROKOFIEV** Symphony No.5

**DAVID ROBERTSON** *conductor*

**GEORGE LI** *piano*

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## Rachmaninoff on Fire

### *Piano Concerto No.3*

The Third Concerto, well known from the film *Shine*, is a virtuoso tour de force! Featuring Australian Piers Lane as soloist.

**SIBELIUS** Scene with Cranes from Kuolema

**DEAN** Fire Music

**RACHMANINOFF** Piano Concerto No.3

**BRETT DEAN** *conductor*

**PIERS LANE** *piano*

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**THU 19 OCT / 1.30PM**

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**sydney symphony  
orchestra**

**David Robertson**  
Chief Conductor and Artistic Director

**THURSDAY AFTERNOON SYMPHONY**

THURSDAY 27 JULY, 1.30PM

**TEA & SYMPHONY\***

FRIDAY 28 JULY, 11AM

**GREAT CLASSICS**

SATURDAY 29 JULY, 2PM

.....  
SYDNEY OPERA HOUSE CONCERT HALL



# RAVISHING RAVEL

**David Robertson** *conductor*  
**Susan Graham** *mezzo-soprano*  
**Sydney Philharmonia Choirs**  
Brett Weymark, Music Director

**IGOR STRAVINSKY (1882–1971)**  
*Fireworks (Feu d'artifice), Op.4*

**MAURICE RAVEL (1875–1937)**  
*Shéhérazade*

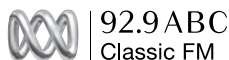
*Asie*  
*La Flûte enchantée*  
*L'Indifférent*

Susan Graham, mezzo-soprano

INTERVAL

**RAVEL**  
*Daphnis et Chloé – Symphonie chorégraphique*

Sydney Philharmonia Choirs  
*See page 14 for the list of scenes*



Saturday afternoon's performance will be recorded by ABC Classic FM for broadcast on Sunday 6 August at 2pm.

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Pre-concert talk by Yvonne Frindle in the Northern Foyer 45 minutes before the Thursday and Saturday performances. For more info visit [sydneyorchestra.com/talk-bios](http://sydneyorchestra.com/talk-bios)

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Estimated durations: 5 minutes, 17 minutes, 20-minute interval, 50 minutes  
The concert will conclude at approximately 3.10pm (Thu), 12.15pm (Fri), 3.40pm (Sat).

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COVER IMAGE: Detail from Young Girls by the Sea (1879) by Pierre Puvis de Chavannes (Musée d'Orsay, Paris / De Agostini Picture Library / G. Dagli Orti / Bridgeman Images)

\* The Tea & Symphony program on Friday will consist of the two Ravel works, performed without interval.



Principal Partner



Michel Fokine's choreographic vision for *Daphnis et Chloé* was inspired by the figures he'd seen on ancient Greek vases – vigorous and virile. Maurice Ravel, on the hand, imagined an idyllic world in the style of rococo artists. TOP: Red-figure pottery depicting athletes and musicians, c.520 BCE. BOTTOM: Daphnis and Chloe – shepherd watching a sleeping shepherdess (1743) by François Boucher.

# Ravishing Ravel: Spinning Tales

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Last year David Robertson conducted the SSO in an all-Scheherazade program, combining Rimsky-Korsakov's symphonic suite with the Australian premiere of John Adams' *Scheherazade.2* violin concerto. Underlying both works was the beautiful and courageous Persian queen who provides the impetus for the stories in *One Thousand and One Nights*.

This week the fabled storyteller, now with a French accent, is again a vital presence in the program. Shéhérazade's sumptuous and exotic world – an imagined Orient that had caught the imagination of the West – inspired both the poetry of Tristan Klingsor and Ravel's gorgeous musical settings. But unlike Rimsky-Korsakov, whose *Scheherazade* nods to particular stories and incidents from the *Arabian Nights*, Klingsor and Ravel focused more on atmosphere. And the result is magical: beguiling music clothed in luxuriant colours.

Rimsky-Korsakov's *Scheherazade* had been choreographed by Michel Fokine for the second season of the Ballets Russes. Two years later, in 1912, Fokine's theme was the Greek tale of Daphnis and Chloe. Ravel was commissioned to provide the score, but the two men didn't entirely agree on how the idea of ancient Greek music and dance might be realised for a 20th-century audience. Fokine's vision – inspired by temple friezes and Attic vases – was vigorous and sometimes violent. Ravel's was more idyllic, courtesy of 18th-century paintings. Two kinds of classicism: ancient and rococo. No wonder Ravel struggled with the orgiastic final dance. At one point, he said, he was so frustrated that he 'put Rimsky's *Scheherazade* on the piano and tried, very humbly, to write something like it'.

Ravel wasn't the only composer in this program who looked to Rimsky-Korsakov. In *Fireworks*, one of his earliest works for orchestra, the young Stravinsky created a 'fantasy for orchestra' that picks up the exotic harmonies and colours of his teacher and mentor to create something both original and ravishing in its effect.

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## READ IN ADVANCE

You can also read SSO program books on your computer or mobile device by visiting our online program library in the week leading up to the concert: [sydneyphilharmonic.com/program\\_library](http://sydneyphilharmonic.com/program_library)

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## ABOUT THE MUSIC

### Igor Stravinsky

#### **Fireworks (Feu d'artifice), Op.4**

This little piece for a large orchestra played a part in Stravinsky's career out of proportion to its size. It became famous in retrospect as the music whose performance convinced the patron and impresario Sergei Diaghilev that the 25-year-old Stravinsky had what he was looking for. The result was commissions, first to orchestrate some Chopin pieces for the ballet *Les Sylphides*, then, when Liadov failed to deliver, the score for *The Firebird*, the first of many artistic triumphs of Stravinsky's association with Diaghilev's Ballets Russes.

*Fireworks*, according to Stravinsky's latter-day reminiscences, was composed in 1908 as a wedding gift for Rimsky-Korsakov's daughter and Maximilian Steinberg. Rimsky-Korsakov had asked to see the score as soon as it was ready, and Stravinsky mailed it to his country estate. A few days later a telegram brought news of the old composer's death, and the package came back, unopened and marked 'Undelivered on account of death of addressee'. Stravinsky expert Richard Taruskin has shown that the composer's memory played him false. *Fireworks* was finished in May or early June 1909 ('a most

### Keynotes

#### STRAVINSKY

*Born near St Petersburg, 1882  
Died New York, 1971*

One of the 20th century's greatest and most influential composers, Igor Stravinsky was born in Russia, later adopting French and then American nationality. His style is similarly multi-faceted, from the exotic instrumental and harmonic colours of *The Firebird* – his first big hit – to the transparency of his later neoclassical style. His most popular orchestral works include the three ballets created for Diaghilev's Ballets Russes, with *Petrushka* and *The Rite of Spring* following the success of *Firebird*. All three, despite their obvious differences, demonstrate Stravinsky's power as a musical storyteller and composer for orchestra.

#### FIREWORKS

Together with the *Scherzo fantastique* (Op.3), this is one of two short orchestral pieces that caught the attention of impresario Sergei Diaghilev and led to Stravinsky's first commissions for the Ballets Russes. The rest, as they say, is history.

The musical style is similar to Stravinsky's first big ballet score, *The Firebird*, with its colourful orchestration and the exotic harmonic vocabulary he learned in large part from Rimsky-Korsakov's operas on fantastic and magical themes. And as with his Opus 3, the influence of Dukas' orchestral scherzo *The Sorcerer's Apprentice* (in turn influenced by Russian models) is also evident.



belated wedding present'), and if *Fireworks* was what Stravinsky sent in the package, Rimsky-Korsakov's family were expecting something from Stravinsky and would not have returned it unopened. What actually seems to have happened was that on news of his teacher's death, in June 1908, Stravinsky put aside work on *Fireworks* to compose the memorial piece *Funeral Song*, Op.5. (This was thought to have been lost straight after its 1909 premiere, but the music was rediscovered in 2015, and the SSO gave the first Australian performances last month.)

Querying the often repeated claim that there were several private performances before the public one, Taruskin establishes that Diaghilev was in the audience when *Fireworks* was first heard, on 9 January 1910, in a St Petersburg concert conducted by Alexander Siloti. Stravinsky, Taruskin points out, was already on Diaghilev's radar; hearing *Fireworks* confirmed his perception that this clever pupil had absorbed the best of Rimsky-Korsakov and brought something new, notably concision and a chic up-to-dateness.

Diaghilev's enthusiasm contrasts with the reaction Stravinsky attributed to Glazunov: 'no talent, only dissonance' (Taruskin correctly attributes this to another reviewer). Dancer Anna Pavlova thought the music 'horribly decadent'. Stravinsky's debt to modern fashion is heard in a direct borrowing from Dukas' *Sorcerer's Apprentice*, first played in St Petersburg, with great and repeated success, in 1904 – the gesture is strikingly like the opening of Dukas' piece, but the harmony is quite different. And it is in the harmonic sphere that *Fireworks* most clearly stakes its claim to be Stravinsky's first really original music, notably in the way chromatic and diatonic elements are combined.

'Explosive' is an obvious epithet for the music of *Fireworks*. In effect it is a perpetuum mobile (and a scherzo, like Dukas' piece and Stravinsky's slightly earlier *Scherzo fantastique*). Any danger of monotony is avoided by incisive rhythms and changing metrical patterns. The instrumentation, Bartók exclaimed as late as 1921, is 'stupefying'. As for the representation of the subject, this program annotator can't do better than to quote his New York predecessor Louis Biancolli: 'every listener is his own pyrotechnist'.

DAVID GARRETT © 1988/2017

Stravinsky's *Fireworks* calls for two flutes, piccolo, two oboes (one doubling cor anglais), three clarinets (one doubling bass clarinet) and two bassoons; six horns, three trumpets, three trombones and tuba; timpani and a large percussion section; two harps, celesta and strings.

The SSO first performed *Fireworks* in 1988, conducted by Jiří Stárek; these are our first performances since then.

...Stravinsky's  
first really  
original music...



## Maurice Ravel

### *Shéhérazade*

#### Texts by Tristan Klingsor

*Asie*

*La Flûte enchantée*

*L'Indifférent*

**Susan Graham** *mezzo-soprano*

Maurice Ravel, like the rest of Paris, attended the influential World Exposition of 1889 and was captivated by the sights and sounds of the Javanese gamelan musicians, as well as other 'curiosities' from all over the globe. The extreme *foreignness* of the visitors from the East is almost unimaginable now to those brought up with a sense of the global village. Inspired by the welter of exotic influences that swept through the city, Ravel planned to write a *Shéhérazade* opera. In the end it only amounted to a 'fairytale overture'. His friend Léon Leclère, known as Tristan Klingsor, produced a rather more successful book of verse.

*Shéhérazade* is the teller of the *Tales of the Arabian Nights*, a courageous young girl who by her gift for storytelling alters the stony heart of the Sultan for the better. Her tales are filled with descriptions of genies, spirits and magic, and with their uncomplicated details of food, clothing and customs, they give the reader quite a detailed picture of what life in the Orient once might have been like. From Klingsor's verses on these themes, Ravel selected three poems: *Asie*, *La Flûte enchantée* and *L'Indifférent*.

Having decided on his texts, Ravel asked Klingsor to read them aloud. This was typical of Ravel's attention to detail where word-setting was concerned. It is always clear that the music was set to the words, not the other way around. As Klingsor wrote in his memoirs: 'For Ravel, setting a poem meant transforming it into expressive recitative, to exalt the inflexions of speech to the state of song, to exalt all the possibilities of the word, but not to subjugate it. Ravel made himself the servant of the poet.'

In addition to the speech rhythms, details of the text appear in Ravel's choices of orchestration, harmony and metre, and in episodes of word-painting. Although the songs are musically lovely and satisfying, their beauty is in the exactness of their marriage to the words. Ravel cleverly aided this by setting the words, for the most part, within a 'reasonable' range, so that the text is not distorted by extremes of register. Ostensibly for soprano, these songs are often sung by a mezzo-soprano because the music lies in the middle area of the voice where

## Keynotes

**RAVEL**

*Born Ciboure, 1875*

*Died Paris, 1937*

As a boy Ravel showed talent as a pianist, but his father (a Swiss engineer) had to bribe him to practise and it was as a composer that he made his greatest contribution. His best-known orchestral works include his Piano Concerto in G, *Mother Goose*, *La Valse*, *Bolero*, and his ballet masterpiece *Daphnis et Chloé*. Three-years' slog completing *Daphnis* ruined his health, and he was deemed unfit when he tried to enlist as a pilot in World War I. Instead he drove an ambulance. Ravel delighted in collecting mechanical toys and exotic ornaments for his home. ('This room,' he would say to his guests, 'is all fake Japanese!') Much of his music – including *Shéhérazade* – shows a corresponding enthusiasm for jewel-like surface detail, delicacy of expression and exotic effect.

### SHÉHÉRAZADE

For this set of songs, Ravel chose three atmospheric poems by Tristan Klingsor. They evoke the world of *One Thousand and One Nights* without attempting to relate any of the tales from that collection. Ravel carefully preserves the speech rhythms of the French texts and paints their imagery with vivid musical gestures. He writes the soprano line in the middle register, which ensures clarity of diction but also means that mezzo-sopranos can include this work in their repertoire too.

it is possible to pronounce words extremely clearly (it does, however, require a good top B flat!).

*Asia, Asia, Asia, Marvellous old land of fairy-tales...  
I should like to see Damascus and the cities of Persia  
With their slender minarets in the air...  
I should like to see Persia, and India, and then China...*

In the first song, *Asie*, the shawm-like oboe solo uses intervallic patterns of 'semitone – augmented second – semitone'. This is a sequence which is stereotypically associated with traditional music from the Middle East [think 'snake charmer'], and would therefore have seemed to Ravel a natural choice for those sections of the poem which deal with that region. When China becomes the focus, there is a similar aural allusion, this time involving pentatonic scales and 'open' fifths. Ravel's choice of instrumentation for the 'Chinese' verses is evocative, too, introducing celesta and gong. Word-painting is evident in his choice of a rocking, arpeggiated theme for moments where the narrator dreams of ships and sailing away to foreign climes.

The principal distinguishing feature of *La Flûte enchantée* is the drowsily beautiful flute solo which drapes itself around the vocal line; but the composer also gives us little touches of the oriental motifs presented in the first song (the 'augmented second' interval, for example). Ravel holds the dream-like quality of the poetry to the very end, leaving listeners hanging on an interrupted cadence.

From the beginning of *L'Indifférent*, the listener is lulled into the warm, seductive evening of a land where attractive strangers might sing in an 'unknown and charming' language on one's doorstep, 'then pass on [their] way'. Ravel once indicated that the key to his personality lay hidden in this song; perhaps this was a reference to the continuing debate about his sexual orientation, or the real reason why he never married, or just his occasional periods of loneliness...

ABRIDGED FROM A NOTE BY KATHERINE KEMP  
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In addition to the solo voice, Ravel's *Shéhérazade* calls for two flutes, piccolo, two oboes, cor anglais, two clarinets and two bassoons; four horns, two trumpets, three trombones and tuba; timpani and percussion; two harps, celesta and strings.

The SSO first performed *Shéhérazade* in 1960 with soprano Lois Marshall and conductor Nicolai Malko, and most recently in 1981 with Joan Patenaude-Yarnell and Charles Mackerras.



‘...to exalt the inflexions  
of speech to the state  
of song...’

TRISTAN KLINGSOR ON RAVEL'S  
APPROACH TO SONG

Turn to page 12 for the complete  
texts and translations of  
*Shéhérazade*.

## Asie

Asie, Asie, Asie  
Vieux pays merveilleux des contes de nourrice  
Où dort la fantaisie comme une impératrice,  
En sa forêt tout emplie de mystère...  
Asie, je voudrais m'en aller avec la goëlette  
Qui se berce ce soir dans le port  
Mystérieuse et solitaire,  
Et qui déploie enfin ses voiles violettes  
Comme un immense oiseau de nuit dans le ciel d'or.  
Je voudrais m'en aller vers des îles de fleurs,  
En écoutant chanter la mer perverse  
Sur un vieux rythme ensorceleur.  
Je voudrais voir Damas et les villes de  
    Perse  
Avec les minarets légers dans l'air.  
Je voudrais voir de beaux turbans de soie  
Sur des visages noirs aux dents claires;  
Je voudrais voir des yeux sombres d'amour  
Et des prunelles brillantes de joie,  
En des peaux jaunes comme des oranges;  
Je voudrais voir des vêtements de velours  
Et des habits à longues franges.  
Je voudrais voir des calumets entre des bouches  
Tout entourées de barbe blanche;  
Je voudrais voir d'âpres marchands aux regards  
    louches,  
Et des cadis, et des vizirs  
Qui du seul mouvement de leur doigt qui se penche  
Accordent vie ou mort au gré de leur désir.  
Je voudrais voir la Perse, et l'Inde, et puis la  
    Chine,  
Les mandarins ventrus sous les ombrelles,  
Et les princesses aux mains fines,  
Et les lettrés qui se querellent  
Sur la poésie et sur la beauté;  
Je voudrais m'attarder au palais enchanté  
Et comme un voyageur étranger  
Contempler à loisir des paysages peints  
Sur des étoffes en des cadres de sapin,  
Avec un personnage au milieu d'un verger;  
Je voudrais voir des assassins souriant  
Du bourreau qui coupe un cou d'innocent  
Avec son grand sabre courbé d'Orient.

## Asia

Asia, Asia, Asia,  
Wondrous old land of bedtime stories  
Where fantasy sleeps like an empress  
In her forest filled with mystery...  
Asia, I would like to sail away with the schooner  
That sits rocking this evening in the port,  
Mysterious and solitary,  
And finally unfurls its violet sails  
Like an enormous night-bird in the golden sky.  
I would like to go to the islands of flowers,  
Listening to the wilful sea singing  
To an old, bewitching rhythm.  
I would like to see Damascus and the cities of  
    Persia  
With their delicate minarets in the sky.  
I would like to see fine silk turbans  
Atop dark faces with sparkling teeth;  
I would like to see eyes dark with love  
And pupils shining with joy  
In skin yellow as oranges;  
I would like to see clothes of velvet  
And robes with long fringes.  
I would like to see pipes in mouths  
Encircled by white beards;  
I would like to watch wily, shady-looking  
    merchants,  
And cadis, and viziers  
Who with a single crook of a finger  
Grant life or death at their whim.  
I would like to see Persia, and India, and then  
    China,  
Pot-bellied mandarins beneath their parasols,  
And princesses with dainty hands,  
And scholars debating  
On poetry and beauty;  
I would like to linger in the enchanted palace  
And, like a foreign traveller,  
Leisurely contemplate landscapes painted  
On cloth in pine frames,  
With a single figure in the middle of an orchard;  
I would like to see assassins smiling  
At the executioner who slices an innocent's neck  
With his great curved oriental sabre.

Je voudrais voir des pauvres et des reines;  
Je voudrais voir des roses et du sang;  
Je voudrais voir mourir d'amour ou bien de  
haine...

Et puis m'en revenir plus tard  
Narrer mon aventure aux curieux de rêves,

En élevant comme Sindbad ma vieille tasse arabe  
De temps en temps jusqu'à mes lèvres  
Pour interrompre le conte avec art...

### **La Flûte enchantée**

L'ombre est douce, et mon maître dort  
Coiffé d'un bonnet conique de soie,  
Et son long nez jaune en sa barbe blanche.

Mais moi, je suis éveillée encore

Et j'écoute au dehors

Une chanson de flûte où s'épanche

Tour à tour la tristesse ou la joie...

Un air tour à tour languoureux ou frivole,

Que mon amoureux chéri joue.

Et quand je m'approche de la croisée

Il me semble que chaque note s'envole

De la flûte vers ma joue

Comme un mystérieux baiser.

### **L'Indifférent**

Tes yeux sont doux comme ceux d'une fille,

Jeune étranger,

Et la courbe fine

De ton beau visage de duvet ombragé

Est plus séduisante encore de ligne.

Ta lèvre chante sur le pas de ma porte

Une langue inconnue et charmante

Comme une musique fausse.

Entre! Et que mon vin te reconforte...

Mais non, tu passes

Et de mon seuil je te vois t'éloigner

Me faisant un dernier geste avec grâce,

Et la hanche légèrement ployée

Par ta démarche féminine et lasse...

TRISTAN KLINGSOR

I would like to see paupers and queens;  
I would like to see roses and blood;  
I would like to see people dying of love or of  
hatred...

And then later, on my return,  
Recount my adventure to those fascinated by  
dreams,

Raising, like Sinbad, my old Arabian cup  
To my lips from time to time,  
to interrupt the tale artfully...

### **The Enchanted Flute**

The shade is gentle, and my master sleeps,

Wearing a silk conical cap,

His long yellow nose in his white beard.

But I, I am still awake

And I listen outside

To the song of a flute pouring forth

Sadness and joy in turn...

A melody by turns languorous and whimsical

Played by my cherished lover.

And when I approach the window

It seems that each note flies

From the flute towards my cheek

Like a mysterious kiss.

### **The Indifferent One**

Your eyes are soft like those of a girl,

Young stranger,

And the fine contour

Of your handsome, down-shadowed face,

Is even more seductive in outline.

Your lips sing on my doorstep

An unfamiliar and charming language

Like out-of-tune music.

Enter! And let my wine revive you...

But no, you pass by

And from my doorway I see you move on,

Making one last graceful gesture to me,

With your hips gently swaying

In your girlish, lethargic gait...

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## Maurice Ravel

### *Daphnis et Chloé* – Symphonie chorégraphique

#### Part I

*Introduction et danse religieuse (Introduction and religious dance)*

*Scène – Danse générale (General dance)*

*Scène – Danse grotesque de Dorcon (Dorcon's grotesque dance)*

*Danse légère et gracieuse de Daphnis (Daphnis' light and graceful dance)*

*Scène – Danse de Lyceion (Lyceion's dance)*

*Nocturne – Danse lente et mystérieuse (Slow and mysterious dance)*

#### Part II

*Introduction*

*Danse guerrière (Warlike dance)*

*Scène – Danse suppliante de Chloé (Chloe's dance of supplication)*

#### Part III

*Lever du jour (Daybreak) Pantomime*

*Danse générale*

### Sydney Philharmonia Choirs

Much to Stravinsky's chagrin, the proposed premiere of his *The Rite of Spring* had to be put off. It was 1912 in Paris, and the Ballets Russes' impresario Sergei Diaghilev explained that his choreographer Mikhail Fokine was too busy with 'other ballets'. One other ballet, to be precise: Ravel's *Daphnis et Chloé*, which its composer had begun in 1909 but taken until 1912 to complete. That Ravel took so long is hardly surprising. The score is one of his longest, with huge orchestral forces including quadruple woodwind and wordless chorus. Characteristically, as well as using the orchestral mass for effects of overwhelming sounds, he also draws from it an almost limitless number of different, smaller combinations. But Ravel was by nature a miniaturist. Even works of comparable scale, such as the opera *L'Enfant et les sortilèges* are, formally speaking, a string of exquisite musical pearls. Despite titling *Daphnis et Chloé* a 'choreographic symphony', the work is, after the relatively expansive opening number, a series of short, characteristic tableaux, though the piece plays continuously. There is, however, an overall unity created by the use of motifs which recur in the score, notably the baleful music with which the god Pan is associated (three deep brass chords), and the onomatopoeic way Ravel depicts laughter.

## Keynotes

### DAPHNIS ET CHLOÉ

Ravel's ancient Greek-inspired 'choreographic symphony' was completed in 1912. It opens with a general dance to the god Pan. Dorcon and Daphnis compete for a kiss from Chloe, Dorcon clumsily, Daphnis gracefully. Another woman dances to tempt Daphnis, unsuccessfully. Suddenly, pirates kidnap the women. Nymphs call on Pan to rescue them.

Part II, in the pirates' camp (wordless chorus and trumpet fanfares), after a warlike dance, Chloe pleads for her freedom. The pirate chief refuses. Pan sends spirits to 'panic' and rout the pirates.

Part III begins with a musical sunrise. A 'pantomime' enacts Pan's attempted rape of Syrinx. She is saved by being transformed into a bunch of reeds, out of which Pan makes pan-pipes, and comforts himself with music instead (flute solo). But it's only a story; the real lovers are united (general dance).

The story is simple and lends itself to the tableau-like structure. The scene is the Arcadian setting that *fin-de-siècle* France imagined as ancient Greece, complete with nymphs and shepherds. Daphnis and Chloe and a group of other young pastoral types appear before a grotto which is decorated with statues of three nymphs and an altar sacred to Pan. Their 'religious dance' features separate dances for the young men and women which are followed by the first 'general dance'. During this the young herdsman Dorcon tries to kiss Chloe, but is prevented by Daphnis. There follows a contest between the two boys – the prize being the coveted kiss. Dorcon's dance is grotesque and clumsy, full of heavy rhythm, parallel fifths in the lower brass and mooring trombones (and is rewarded by derisive laughter). Daphnis' is light and graceful, and he, of course, wins.

The women lead Chloe off-stage, though Lyceion remains to try and tempt Daphnis with a sexy dance, but to no avail.

Suddenly, the women are seen pursued by pirates; Daphnis looks for Chloe but finds only her sandal and collapses with grief. The statues of the nymphs come to life, comfort Daphnis and call on Pan to save the day.

Part II of the ballet is set in the pirates' camp – evoked by wordless chorus and trumpet fanfares. The pirates appear and dance their warlike dance, to swirling wind passages and acrobatic trumpet motives, somehow getting blind drunk in the process. Chloe is brought in and pleads for her freedom in the dance of supplication. The pirate chief, however, has other ideas but Chloe is saved by the miraculous intervention of the horned god, whose followers cause their trademark panic and rout the pirates.



**Portrait of Ravel by Achille Ouvre, 1907**

**Vaslav Nijinsky (who first danced Daphnis) and Ravel playing the score of the ballet at the piano. A Greek-style vase stands beside the music desk.**



Back at the grotto, Part III begins with a justly celebrated musical sunrise. The air is full of the sounds of running streams and bird song, and the music's cumulative power and climax is matched shortly after by the reunion of Daphnis and Chloe.

Pan, according to an old shepherd, has shown pity to the young couple because of his unrequited love for the nymph, Syrinx. In the 'Pantomime', Daphnis and Chloe dance the story in which the nymph, terrified at being chased by a randy creature with horns, a tail and goat's feet, prays to her father (a river god) who transforms her into a bunch of reeds just as Pan closes his embrace. The sound of his heaving breath into the now-broken reeds gives Pan an idea, and he invents the pan-pipes to comfort himself with music. Ravel at this point writes one of the greatest and most difficult flute solos in the repertoire.

But where Chloe mimes Syrinx's rejection of Pan, it's only a story, and the lovers are finally reunited in a passage of luminous full orchestral sound. This leads to a 'general dance' of celebration, which is truly orgiastic, partly achieved by its relentless pace and its five-beats-to-a-bar metre: legend has it that the dancers found this difficult (and a year later they were to dance the *Rite of Spring!*). Ravel's solution was to have them say their boss's name as they danced in rehearsal: Ser-gei-Dia-ghi-lev, Ser-gei- Dia-ghi-lev, Ser-gei-Dia-ghi-lev... As in *Bolero*, *Daphnis et Chloé* ends with a dance whose own centrifugal force blasts it apart.

Stravinsky, Norman Lebrecht tells us, 'envied the delicacy of...*Daphnis et Chloé*, so different from his own orchestral sledgehammer'. Indeed the two composers had good relations and even collaborated on a rescoring of Mussorgsky's *Khovanshchina*. But the superficial differences between *Daphnis* and the *Rite* should not obscure Ravel's achievement in creating a large-scale work of great power.

GORDON KERRY © 2004

Ravel's *Daphnis et Chloé* is scored for three flutes (two doubling piccolo), alto flute, two oboes, cor anglais, two clarinets, bass clarinet, E flat clarinet, three bassoons, and sarrusophone; four horns, four trumpets, three trombones, and tuba; timpani and eight percussion; two harps and celesta; strings and wordless chorus.

The SSO first performed music from *Daphnis et Chloé* under Percy Code in 1942. The *Herald's* hard-to-please Neville Cardus reported: 'the orchestra rose to a level of virtuosity not common here... The music is the most ravishing orchestration in existence; among the most difficult to play and to conduct...everybody was inspired to an unusual musical plane.' The SSO's most recent performance of the complete ballet was in 2010 under Oleg Caetani.

Legend has it the dancers found the five-in-a-bar metre of the final General Dance difficult. Ravel's solution was to get them to chant their boss's name as they danced:  
Ser-gei-Dia-ghi-lev,  
Ser-gei-Dia-ghi-lev...



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JAY FRAM

## David Robertson

THE LOWY CHAIR OF CHIEF CONDUCTOR AND ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

---

David Robertson is a compelling and passionate communicator whose stimulating ideas and music-making have captivated audiences and musicians alike. A consummate musician and masterful programmer, he has forged strong relationships with major orchestras throughout Europe and North America.

He made his Australian debut with the SSO in 2003 and soon became a regular visitor to Sydney, with highlights including the Australian premiere of John Adams' *Doctor Atomic* Symphony and concert performances of *The Flying Dutchman*. In 2014, his inaugural season as Chief Conductor and Artistic Director, he led the SSO on a seven-city tour of China. More recent highlights have included presentations of *Elektra*, *Tristan und Isolde*, Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis*, and *Porgy and Bess*; the Australian premiere of Adams' *Scheherazade*. 2 violin concerto, Messiaen's *From the Canyons to the Stars* and Stravinsky ballet scores (also recorded for CD release); as well as the launch of the SSO at Carriageworks series.

Last year he began his 12th season as Music Director of the St Louis Symphony. Other titled posts have included Principal Guest Conductor of the BBC Symphony Orchestra, Music Director of the Orchestre National de Lyon and resident conductor of the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra. An expert in 20th- and 21st-century music, he has been Music Director of the Ensemble Intercontemporain in Paris (where composer and conductor Pierre Boulez was an early supporter).

He is also a champion of young musicians, devoting time to working with students and young artists.

David Robertson is a frequent guest with major orchestras and opera houses worldwide, conducting the New York Philharmonic, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Boston Symphony Orchestra, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, the Philadelphia and Cleveland orchestras, Berlin Philharmonic, Staatskapelle Dresden, BBC Symphony Orchestra and Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra, as well as conducting at La Scala, Opéra de Lyon, San Francisco Opera and the Bavarian and Hamburg state operas. In 2014 he conducted the controversial but highly acclaimed Metropolitan Opera premiere of John Adams' *Death of Klinghoffer*.

His awards and accolades include Musical America Conductor of the Year (2000), Columbia University's 2006 Ditson Conductor's Award, and the 2005–06 ASCAP Morton Gould Award for Innovative Programming. In 2010 he was elected a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and in 2011 a Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres.

David Robertson was born in Santa Monica, California, and educated at the Royal Academy of Music in London, where he studied French horn and composition before turning to conducting. He is married to pianist Orli Shaham.

*The position of Chief Conductor and Artistic Director is also supported by Principal Partner Emirates.*



DARIO ACOSTA

## Susan Graham

*mezzo-soprano*

---

Susan Graham rose to the highest echelon of international performers within a few years of her professional debut, mastering an astonishing repertoire along the way. Her operatic roles range from Monteverdi's Poppea to Sister Helen Prejean in Heggie's *Dead Man Walking*, a role written specially for her, and her recital repertoire is so broad that 14 composers from Purcell to Sondheim are represented on her recent album, *Virgins, Vixens & Viragos*. This distinctly American artist is also one of the foremost exponents of French vocal music – in both opera and concert – and has received the French government's Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur.

Her earliest operatic successes were in Mozart trouser roles such as Cherubino (*The Marriage of Figaro*), followed by Octavian (*Der Rosenkavalier*) and the Composer (*Ariadne auf Naxos*). These brought her to prominence on the world's major opera stages, including the Metropolitan Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, San Francisco Opera, Covent Garden, Paris Opera, La Scala, Bavarian State Opera, Vienna State Opera and Salzburg Festival.

Recent highlights include Dido in *Les Troyens* (Lyric Opera of Chicago), the Washington National Opera revival of *Dead Man Walking* (now as the convict's mother), Erika in Barber's *Vanessa* (Berlin) and her role debut as Countess Geschwitz in *Lulu* (Metropolitan). Concert performances

have included galas with the San Francisco Symphony and New York Philharmonic, *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* at Carnegie Hall, Octavian to Renée Fleming's Marschallin in *Der Rosenkavalier* (Boston), and Songs of the Auvergne (Philadelphia), as well as presentations with Malcolm Martineau of *Frauenliebe und -leben Variations*, a recital inspired by Schumann's song cycle.

She has also created leading roles in Harbison's *Great Gatsby* and Picker's *An American Tragedy*; she made her Dallas Opera debut as Tina in Argento's *Aspern Papers*, and headed an all-star cast as Sycorax in the Met's Baroque pasticcio *The Enchanted Island*. She has starred as Prince Orlofsky in *Die Fledermaus* (Houston Grand Opera, Santa Fe Opera and Metropolitan Opera) and in the title role of *The Merry Widow* (Metropolitan), and made an acclaimed musical theatre debut in *The King and I* in Paris.

Her distinguished discography includes a series of lauded solo albums, including *Un frisson français, C'est ça la vie, c'est ça l'amour!*, *La Belle Époque*, and a Grammy Award-winning collection of Ives songs.

Last week in Sydney, Susan Graham sang Mahler's Third Symphony with David Robertson and the SSO.

# THE CHOIR

## Sydney Philharmonia Choirs

KEITH SAUNDERS



Sydney Philharmonia Choirs presents the art of choral singing at the highest standard, and develops the talents of those with a passion for singing in Sydney and beyond. Founded in 1920, it has become Australia's finest choral organisation and performs regularly as a presenting partner at the Sydney Opera House.

Led by Music Director Brett Weymark since 2003, Sydney Philharmonia comprises six choirs that perform music ranging from choral classics, to musical theatre and commissions by Australian composers. Sydney Philharmonia presents its own annual season and collaborates with leading conductors, soloists and orchestras in Australia and overseas. In 2002, Sydney Philharmonia Choirs was the first Australian choir to sing at the BBC Proms (Mahler's Eighth Symphony under Simon Rattle), returning again in 2010.

The choirs perform in the SSO's subscription series every year. Highlights in 2016 included a Haydn and Mozart program conducted by Brett Weymark, Haydn's *Creation*, Beethoven's Ninth and a semi-staged presentation of *Porgy and Bess*. This year's collaborations include music by Brahms, Debussy's *Pelléas et Mélisande*, Last Night of the Proms and Mahler's Third Symphony, and in November with David Robertson: *Belshazzar's Feast* and a new oratorio, *Halleluja*, by Péter Eötvös.

Highlights of Sydney Philharmonia's 2017 concert series include Bach's *St Matthew Passion*, Rossini's *Stabat Mater*, Tudor Portraits (in August), Elgar's *Dream of Gerontius* (October) and Handel's *Messiah* (December).



KEITH SAUNDERS

### **BRETT WEYMARK** *Music Director*

Brett Weymark is one of the foremost choral conductors in Australia. He studied singing at the University of Sydney and conducting at the Sydney Conservatorium alongside studies in Europe and America. He has held positions with the Song Company, Opera Australia, Pacific Opera, Sounds Baroque, Cantillation and the University of Western Sydney, as well as working for many of Australia's major musical organisations, and in 2002 he was awarded a Centenary Award for services to music.

In 2003 he was appointed Music Director of Sydney Philharmonia Choirs. Since then he has conducted the choirs in performances throughout Australia and internationally in a repertoire ranging from classical works and premieres of music by composers such as Elena Kats-Chernin, Andrew Schultz and Peter Sculthorpe, to programs with a contemporary flavour. He has led the choirs to accolades such the Helpmann Award-winning performances of Stravinsky's *Oedipus Rex* and *Symphony of Psalms*, directed by Peter Sellars, and also prepared them for conductors such as Simon Rattle, Charles Mackerras, Vladimir Ashkenazy, Edo de Waart, Charles Dutoit and David Robertson. In 2005 he initiated the annual ChorusOz event, and he has developed programs such as *Singing at the House* and *Festival Chorus*.

He has also conducted the West Australian and Tasmanian symphony orchestras, Orchestra of the Antipodes, Sydney Youth Orchestra, and productions for WAAPA, Pacific Opera and OzOpera. Conducting highlights with the SSO have included the premiere of *Jandamarra* by Paul Stanhope and Steve Hawke.



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# *SYDNEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA*



## **DAVID ROBERTSON**

THE LOWY CHAIR OF  
CHIEF CONDUCTOR AND ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

.....  
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.....

Founded in 1932 by the Australian Broadcasting Commission, the Sydney Symphony Orchestra has evolved into one of the world's finest orchestras as Sydney has become one of the world's great cities. Resident at the iconic Sydney Opera House, the SSO also performs in venues throughout Sydney and regional New South Wales, and international tours to Europe, Asia and the USA have earned the orchestra worldwide recognition for artistic excellence.

Well on its way to becoming the premier orchestra of the Asia Pacific region, the SSO has toured China on four occasions, and in 2014 won the arts category in the Australian Government's inaugural Australia-China Achievement Awards, recognising ground-breaking work in nurturing the cultural and artistic relationship between the two nations.

The orchestra's first chief conductor was Sir Eugene Goossens, appointed in 1947; he was followed by Nicolai Malko, Dean Dixon, Moshe Atzmon, Willem van Otterloo, Louis Frémaux,

Sir Charles Mackerras, Zdeněk Mácal, Stuart Challender, Edo de Waart and Gianluigi Gelmetti. Vladimir Ashkenazy was Principal Conductor from 2009 to 2013. The orchestra's history also boasts collaborations with legendary figures such as George Szell, Sir Thomas Beecham, Otto Klemperer and Igor Stravinsky.

The SSO's award-winning Learning and Engagement program is central to its commitment to the future of live symphonic music, developing audiences and engaging the participation of young people. The orchestra promotes the work of Australian composers through performances, recordings and commissions. Recent premieres have included major works by Ross Edwards, Lee Bracegirdle, Gordon Kerry, Mary Finsterer, Nigel Westlake, Paul Stanhope and Georges Lentz, and recordings of music by Brett Dean have been released on both the BIS and SSO Live labels.

Other releases on the SSO Live label, established in 2006, include performances conducted by Alexander Lazarev, Sir Charles Mackerras and David Robertson, as well as the complete Mahler symphonies conducted by Vladimir Ashkenazy.

This is David Robertson's fourth year as Chief Conductor and Artistic Director.

# THE ORCHESTRA



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KEITH SAUNDERS

*Janet and Robert Constable with Associate Principal Flute Emma Sholl. 'When we first met her in the Green Room at the Opera House,' recalls Robert, 'it was a lovely hug from Emma that convinced us that this was not only an opportunity to support her chair but to get involved with the orchestra and its supporters. It has been a great experience.'*



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 Dr Jade Bond  
 Dr Andrew Botros  
 Peter Braithwaite  
 Andrea Brown  
 Nikki Brown  
 Prof Attila Brungs  
 CBRE  
 Jacqueline Chalmers  
 Tony Chalmers  
 Dharmendra Chandran  
 Enrique Antonio Chavez Salceda  
 Louis Chien  
 Colin Clarke  
 Anthony Cohen  
 Paul Colgan  
 Natasha Cook  
 Claire Cooper  
 Michelle Cottrell  
 Robbie Cranfield  
 Peter Creedon  
 Asha Cugati  
 Juliet Curtin  
 Paul Deschamps  
 Catherine Donnelly  
 Jennifer Drysdale  
 Karen Ewels  
 Roslyn Farrar  
 Rob Fearnley  
 Talitha Fishburn  
 Alexandra Gibson  
 Sam Giddings  
 Jeremy Goff  
 Michael & Kerry Gonski

Lisa Gooch  
 Hilary Goodson  
 Tony Grierson  
 Sarah L Hesse  
 Kathryn Higgs  
 Peter Howard  
 Jennifer Hoy  
 Katie Hryce  
 James Hudson  
 Jacqui Huntington  
 Matt James  
 Amelia Johnson  
 Virginia Judge  
 Paul Kalmar  
 Bernard Keane  
 Tisha Kelemen  
 Aernout Kerbert  
 Patrick Kok  
 Angela Kwan  
 John Lam-Po-Tang  
 Robert Larosa  
 Ben Leeson  
 Gary Linnane  
 Gabriel Lopata  
 Robert McGroy  
 Amy Matthews  
 Elizabeth Miller  
 Matt Milson  
 Dean Montgomery  
 Marcus & Fern Moufarrige  
 Sarah Moufarrige  
 Julia Newbould  
 Nick Nichles  
 Edmund Ong  
 Olivia Pascoe  
 Jonathan Perkinson  
 Stephanie Price  
 Michael Radovnikovic  
 Katie Robertson  
 Dr Benjamin Robinson  
 Alvaro Rodas Fernandez  
 Prof. Anthony Michael Schembri  
 Benjamin Schwartz  
 Ben Shipley  
 Toni Sinclair  
 Patrick Slattery  
 Tim Steele  
 Kristina Stefanova  
 Ben Sweeten  
 Randal Tame  
 Sandra Tang  
 Ian Taylor  
 Cathy Thorpe  
 Michael Tidball  
 Mark Trevarthen  
 Michael Tuffy  
 Russell van Howe &  
 Mr Simon Beets  
 Sarah Vick  
 Mike Watson  
 Alan Watters  
 Jon Wilkie  
 Adrian Wilson  
 Yvonne Zammit

# SALUTE

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Principal Partner

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The Sydney Symphony Orchestra is assisted by the Commonwealth Government through the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body.



Create NSW  
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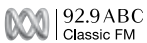
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